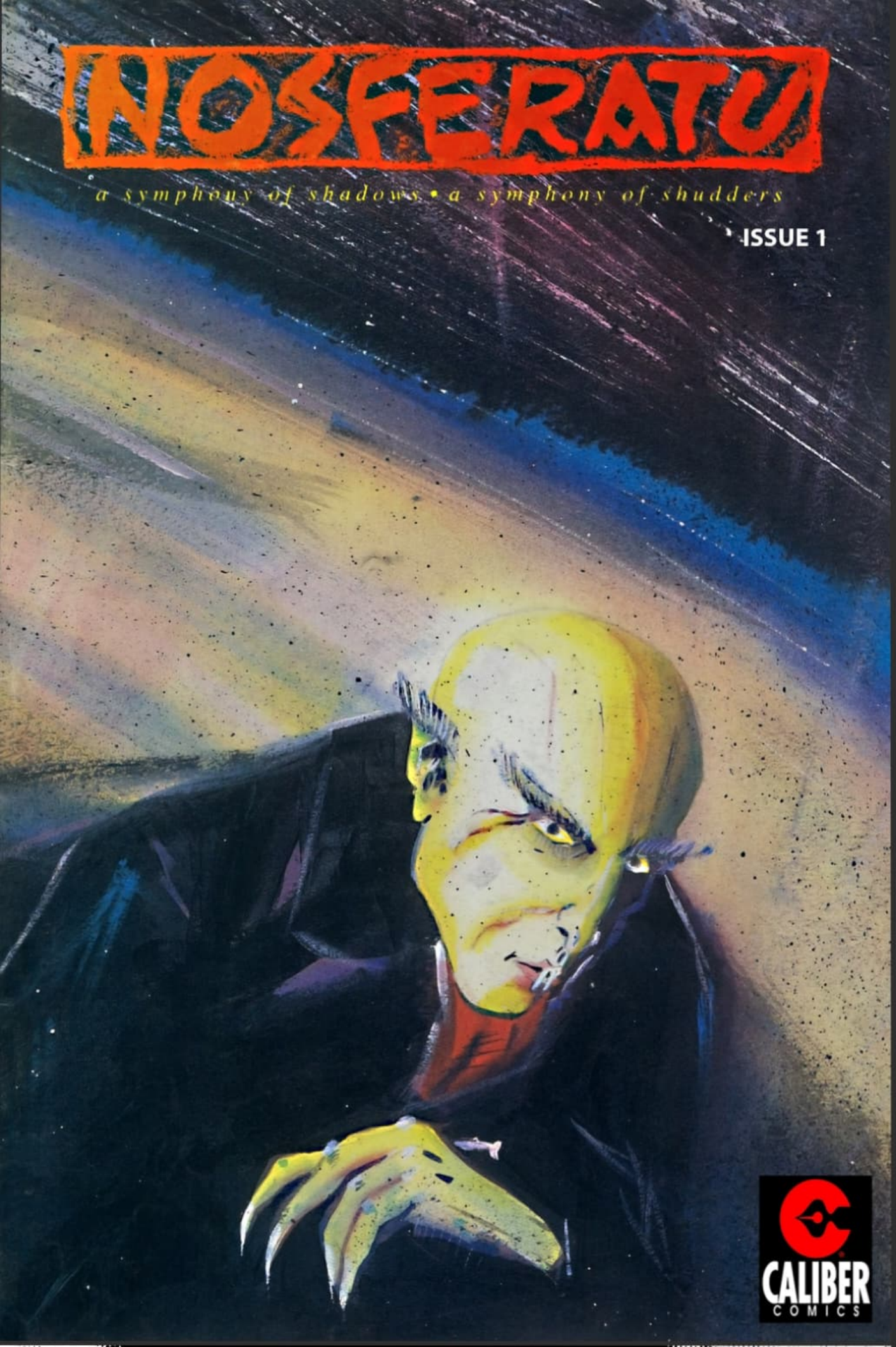
NOSFERATU

a symphony of shadows • a symphony of shudders

ISSUE 1



CALIBER COMICS

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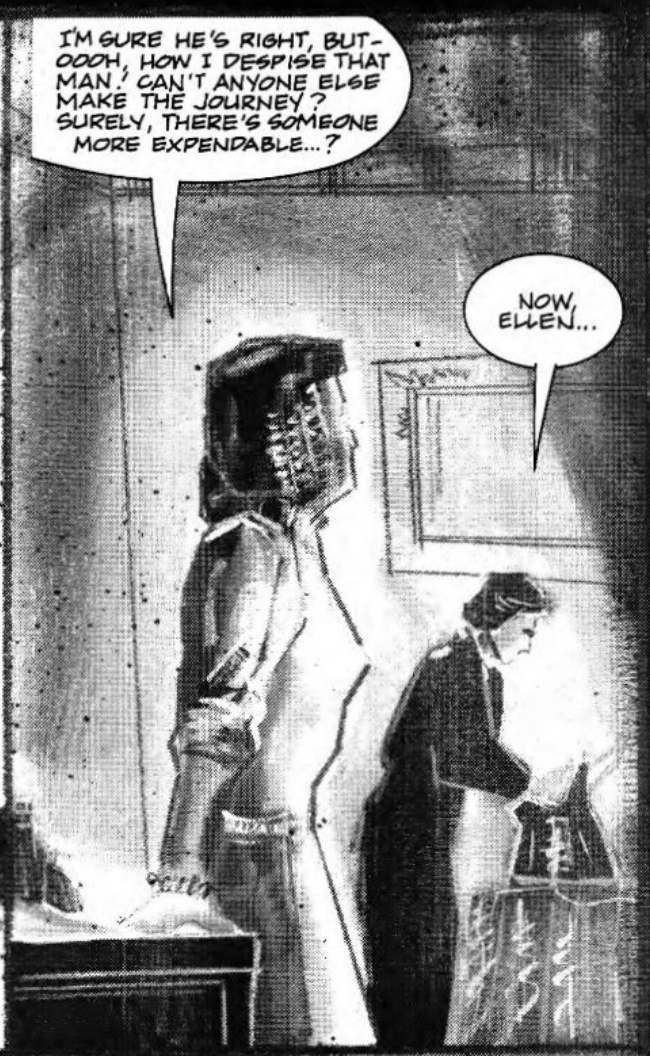
NOSFERATU
"NOSFERATU! THE VERY NAME CHILLS THE BLOOD!
"NOSFERATU – WAS THIS EVIL THING RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PESTILENCE IN BREMEN IN 1838?
"FOR A LONG TIME I HAVE SEARCHED FOR THE CAUSES OF THIS TERRIBLE EPIDEMIC...

"...AND I HAVE DISCOVERED THE INNOCENT FIGURES OF JOHANN HUTTER AND HIS YOUNG BRIDE ELLEN TO BE DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH THE PESTILENCE AT ITS HEIGHT."
NOW, JOHANN, YOU MUST PROMISE ME THAT YOU SHANT LET THAT EVIL MAN KEEP YOU PAST CLOSING AGAIN TONIGHT.
YOU HAVE MY WORD, MY LOVE.
"ALTHOUGH THEY'D BEEN MARRIED BUT A SHORT TIME, IT WAS OBVIOUS TO ALL OF BREMEN THAT THE HUTTERS SHARED A PROFOUND AND AGELESS LOVE."
YOUNG MAN, WHY DON'T YOU TRY TO MAKE SOMETHING OF YOURSELF?
WHAT, HERR CAVALLIUS, AND GIVE UP MY LIFE OF LEISURE?
"JOHANN HAD ALWAYS IMPRESSED ME AS A MAN WHO WOULD GO FAR. AT ONCE SERIOUS-MINDED AND GOOD-NATURED, IF HE SEEMED OVERLY AMBITIOUS, WELL, WHY NOT? HE WAS YOUNG AND DESIROUS OF CERTAIN LUXURIES FOR HIMSELF AND ELLEN. WHO COULD BLAME HIM FOR WANTING TO FURTHER HIS STATION?"

"AND DEAR, SWEET ELLEN. A YOUNG WOMAN OF QUIET GRACE AND ELEGANCE, NOT AT ALL LIKE THE FRIVOLOUS GIRLS THAT SEEM TO INHABIT THESE MODERN TIMES. HER SOLE CONCERN WAS TO KEEP HER HUSBAND CARED FOR. ELLEN NEVER SPOKE HARSHLY OF ANYONE...
"EXCEPT PERHAPS THIS MAN. REAL ESTATE AGENT KNOCK, JOHANN'S EMPLOYER, WAS A STRANGE MAN AND HIS UNKINDLY MANNERS SEEMED EVEN STRANGER ON A CERTAIN SUBJECT."
HUTTER!
I SAY, HUTTER!
YES, HERR KNOCK?
A COUNT? HERE IN BREMEN?
AN IMORTANT LETTER HAS ARRIVED, FROM TRANSYLVANIA! A COUNT ORLAC WISHES TO PURCHASE A HOME IN OUR TOWN.
THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU, HUTTER. THE COUNT IS A RICH AND GENEROUS MAN.

YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE A MARVELOUS VOYAGE AND...
VOYAGE?
TO TRANSYLVANIA, OF COURSE.
BUT, HERR KNOCK, ELLEN AND I HAVE JUST MAR--
WAS IT NOT YOU, HUTTER, WHO HAS BEEN NEEDLING ME INCESSANTLY FOR MORE PROMINENT ASSIGNMENTS?
YES, HERR KNOCK, BUT--
SPLENDID! NOW, REMEMBER, WHILE ENROUTE, THAT THE VILLAGERS ARE QUITE PAGAN...
DON'T LET THEM KNOW THAT YOU ARE TRAVELLING TO THE REGION KNOWN AS "THE LAND OF THE PHANTOMS"! HA HA HA HA HA!
Transylvania
Transylvania

HERR KNOCK SUGGESTS THAT YOU DO NOT TAKE THE TRIP WITH ME, AS THE CARPATHIANS CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS.
TransylVania


I'M SURE HE'S RIGHT, BUT-OOOH, HOW I DESPISE THAT MAN! CAN'T ANYONE ELSE MAKE THE JOURNEY? SURELY, THERE'S SOMEONE MORE EXPENDABLE...?
NOW, ELLEN...

THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR ME. FOR US. WHY, THE COMMISSION FROM THIS SALE ALONE COULD--
I KNOW, I KNOW. IT'S JUST THAT I'LL MISS YOU SO!

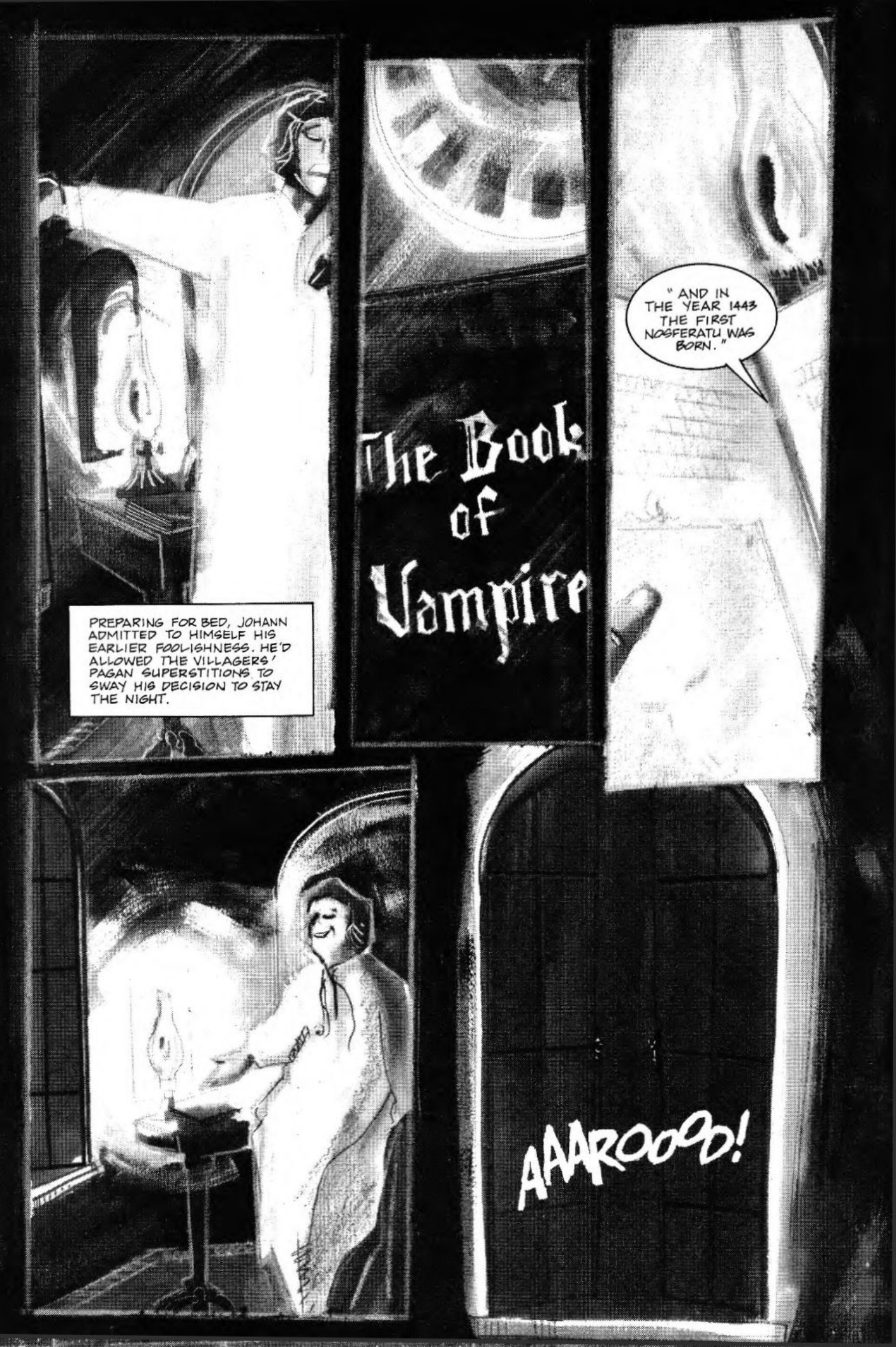
AND I, YOU. I SWEAR TO YOU, I'LL BE AS QUICK AS I CAN. I SHANT SPEND A MINUTE MORE THAN NECESSARY THERE. I'LL BE GONE A MONTH AT THE MOST. AND I'LL WRITE EVERYDAY.
I SHOULD HOPE SO!

THAT'S THE PLACE? THE OLD MONTAGUE HOME? WHY SHOULD ANYONE WANT TO PURCHASE SUCH A RUN-DOWN HOVEL AS THAT?
IT'S A MYSTERY. BUT IF THAT'S THE COUNT'S WISH...
SAY, I'VE A THOUGHT! WHY DON'T YOU STAY AT YOUR FRIEND ANNIE'S FOR A TIME? SHE'S ALWAYS COMPLAINING SHE DOESN'T SEE ENOUGH OF YOU.
WELL, PERHAPS FOR A FEW DAYS...
TAKE CARE, MY LOVE. GODSPEED.
I LOVE YOU.
HURRY BACK.
"ELLEN WAS DISTRESSED. SHE AND JOHANN HAD NEVER BEEN SEPARATED FOR MORE THAN A DAY SINCE THEIR WEDDING. LATER, SHE CONFIDED IN ME THAT, AS SHE WAVED GOODBYE TO HIM, SHE HAD THE DISTINCT AND UNNATURAL FEAR THAT SHE MIGHT NEVER SEE HER HUSBAND ALIVE AGAIN."

ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF COUNT ORLAC'S LAND, AN EXHAUSTED JOHANN STOPS FOR A MEAL AND TO MAKE HIS TOILET BEFORE THE MEETING.
EAGER TO COMPLETE HIS ASSIGNMENT, JOHANN USED RELAY AFTER RELAY OF HORSES, THROUGH CLOUDS OF DUST, BARELY STOPPING FOR REST. STILL, FOR ALL HIS EFFORT, THE JOURNEY TOOK QUITE A NUMBER OF DAYS, UNTIL...
THE INNKEEPER WAS A CORDIAL AND GENEROUS HOST, FILLING JOHANN'S FLAGON TIME AND TIME AGAIN BEFORE IT COULD BE DRAINED, AND JOHANN, NEVER A LUSTY DRINKER, THIS TIME DRANK DEEP, PARTLY FROM EXHAUSTION, PARTLY FROM ANXIETY AT WHAT LAY AHEAD. PERHAPS THIS IS WHY HE MADE THE FIRST OF MANY ERRORS...
INNKEEPER! MY DINNER QUICKLY. I WOULD HURRY TO THE CHATEAU OF COUNT ORLAC!

AS ALL EYES FELL UPON HIM, A DREAD WORMING ITS WAY UP HIS SPINE, JOHANN REMEMBERED THE WORDS OF HERR KNOCK...
"DON'T LET THEM KNOW YOU ARE TRAVELLING TO THE 'LAND OF THE PHANTOMS'! ".

PERHAPS IT WAS THE FRIGHTENED, DOE-EYED STARE OF THE CROWD, OR THE INNKEEPER'S PLAINTIVE REQUEST...
YOU MUST NOT GO ON. AT THIS HOUR THE EVIL SPIRITS BECOME ALL POWERFUL!
...OR BOTH, BUT JOHANN CONVINCED HIMSELF THAT IT WOULD BE BEST TO MEET COUNT ORLAC IN THE MORNING, AFTER A DEEP AND RESTFUL SLUMBER.
HOW COULD HE KNOW THAT HE WAS DELAYING THE INEVITABLE?


PREPARING FOR BED, JOHANN ADMITTED TO HIMSELF HIS EARLIER FOOLISHNESS. HE'D ALLOWED THE VILLAGERS' PAGAN SUPERSTITIONS TO SWAY HIS DECISION TO STAY THE NIGHT.
The Book of Vampire
"AND IN THE YEAR 1443 THE FIRST NOSFERATU WAS BORN."
AAAROOOO!

The Book of Vampires
ANIMALS MAY BE AWARE OF DANGER WHEN HUMANS ARE NOT.

EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, HAVING HURRIEDLY MADE HIS TOILET, JOHANN ROUSED A COACHMAN AND PAID THE SLEEPY INNKEEP. ANXIOUS TO BE RID OF THE PREVIOUS NIGHT'S TERROR, JOHANN REFUSED BREAKFAST, SO INTENT WAS HE TO PUT DISTANCE BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE INN.
THE BRISK MORNING AIR WARMED WITH TIME, AND JOHANN BASKED IN ITS SOOTHING PRESENCE, ALL BUT FORGETTING THE WEIRD DISCOMFORT OF THE INN. SOON HE'D ARRIVE AT THE COUNT'S CHATEAU AND HE AND HIS HOST WOULD HAVE A GOOD LAUGH ABOUT ALL OF--
WHOA!
QUICKLY! SOON THE SUN WILL DISAPPEAR!
WHAT IS IT? WHY DO YOU STOP?
WE WILL NOT GO ON. NOT FOR ANYTHING IN THE WORLD. THIS IS THE LAND OF THE PHANTOMS!
ARE YOU BOTH MAD? I HIRED YOU TO DRIVE ME TO COUNT ORLAC'S CHATEAU, JUST BEYOND THE BRIDGE.
I'LL HEAR NO MORE ABOUT GHOSTS OR WEIRD BEASTIES OR...

...OR VAMPIRES.
CURSING HIS FATE, JOHANN CROSSED THE BRIDGE. THE CHATEAU WAS MUCH TOO FAR TO WALK...
...BUT HE WAS CERTAIN THAT DIRECTLY A COACH WOULD PASS, DRIVEN BY A MORE SENSIBLE MAN, FOR WHOM GOLD HELD MORE SWAY THAN PAGAN RUBBISH. ALL HE NEED DO IS WAIT.
AS THE DARKNESS SETTLED, JOHANN FELL INTO A FITFUL SLUMBER, SEEING AGAIN THE FACES OF HIS FRIGHTENED COACHMEN, HEARING AGAIN THEIR WORDS OF DREAD...
KLOP KLOP KLOP...

"...This is the
Land of
the Phantoms"

EX-EXCUSE ME, SIR. MIGHT I PLEAD A RIDE WITH YOU AS FAR AS THE CHATEAU OF COUNT--
OR-ORLAC? THANK YOU.

WITH DREAD RISING AS A WINTER FEVER, JOHANN FLED THE CAB AND ITS OWNER, LOATHE TO HAVE FURTHER CONTACT WITH EITHER. IN ANY EVENT, THE CARRIAGE SPED WILDLY AWAY, STRANGELY SILENT, INTO THE NIGHT, AND JOHANN STOOD BEFORE THE CHATEAU'S GATE, SOFTLY REHEARSING THE INTRODUCTION HE'D PREPARED.
GOOD EVENING, YOUR LORDSHIP... PLEASURE TO FINALLY MEET YOU. GOOD EVENING, MY GOOD COUNT - NO - WELL MET, YOUR - NO...
NONE TOO QUICKLY FOR JOHANN, THE WEIRD COACH REACHED COUNT ORLAC'S CHATEAU, AN ANCIENT, CRUMBLING EDIFICE, FROM WHICH EMERGED SCORES OF BATS.
JOHANN WAS STUNNED WHEN, AS IF GUIDED BY UNSEEN HANDS, THE GATES SWUNG OPEN OF THEIR OWN VOLITION. FURTHER DISTURBING WAS THE FIGURE WHO STOOD WAITING WITHIN, TALL AND GAUNT IN APPEARANCE, FACE HIDDEN IN THE SHADOWS. THE FIGURE MOVED GRACEFULLY FORWARD, AS IF HIS FEET DID NOT COME IN CONTACT WITH THE EARTH.
GOOD EVENING. MY NAME IS JOHANN HUTTER OF BREMEN. I AM IN THE EMPLOY OF HERR KNOCK AND HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A CERTAIN COUNT ORLAC. ARE YOU HE? MAY I SAY, SIR, WHAT A --
... REAL ... MEET... PLEASURE ...

YOU ARE LATE YOUNG MAN. IT IS NEARLY MIDNIGHT. MY SERVANTS HAVE ALREADY RETIRED.
THE DEMONIC FACE TURNED AWAY, AND JOHANN HEAVED A SIGH OF RELIEF. WHAT STRANGE INFIRM HAD BEFALLEN HIS HOST, TO CAUSE SUCH A PALLOR OF COMPLEXION? SUCH A MALFORMATION OF FACIAL STRUCTURE?
AS HE FOLLOWED THE COUNT INTO THE CASTLE, FORCING HIMSELF FORWARD AGAINST THE URGE TO FLEE MADLY, JOHANN CHIDED HIMSELF FOR HIS FEAR. WHAT HARM COULD BE DONE HIM BY A MAN WHO LOOKED SO ANEMIC?

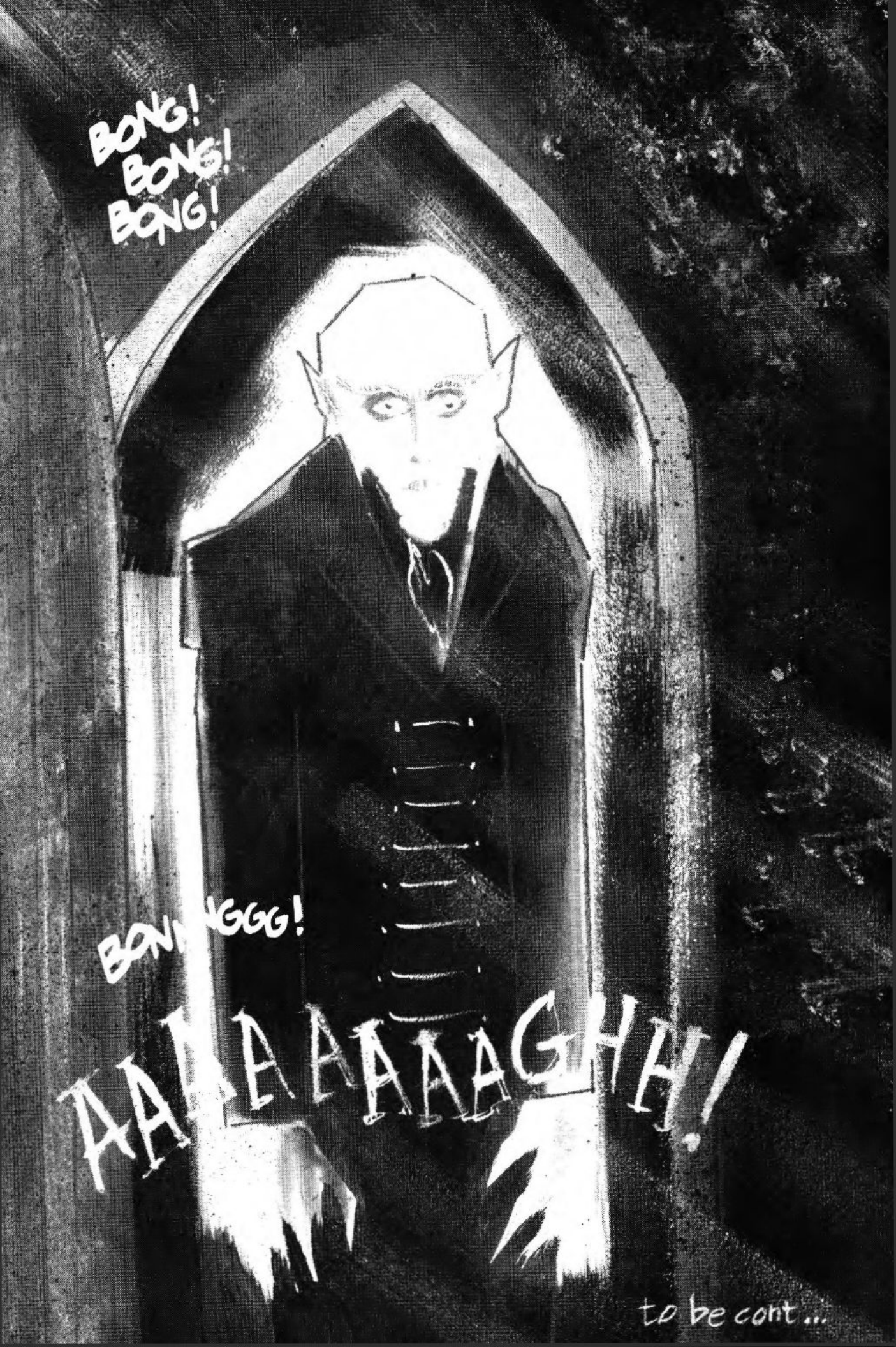
AFTER BEING SHOWN HIS ROOM (CURIOUSLY SMALL AND CONFINED IN SUCH A CAVERNOUS MANSE), JOHANN SAT DOWN TO A LATE MEAL WITH HIS HOST, WHO DID NOT EAT. AS COUNT ORLAC MADE A CURSORY PERUSAL OF THE DEED HUTTER HAD GIVEN HIM, THE YOUNG MAN STUDIED THE WEIRDLY COUNT...
HOW STRANGE HIS APPEARANCE. HIS PALE SKIN, SICKLY YELLOW IN THE CANDLELIGHT - IN ANY LIGHT. HIS MISSHAPEN SKULL AND LANK FIGURE, LIKE A SCARE-CROW'S, MADE GHASTLY BY ITS ANIMATION, HIS EARS, LARGE AND BAT-LIKE.
HIS EYES, FIERCE -- PIERCING. HAUNTED AND HAUNTING, GUARDED AGAINST REVEALING HIS SECRETS, YET SEEKING OUT YOUR OWN, WHICH YOU MIGHT GIVE OUT FREELY MERELY THAT HE AVERT HIS GAZE.
JOHANN WONDERED HOW THIS STRANGE CREATURE, SO PERFECT IN THESE GRIM SURROUNDINGS, MIGHT FARE IN THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE OF A GROWING CITY LIKE BREMEN? AND WHY WOULD HE WANT TO?
BONG
BONG
SSS! DAMN!

YOUR BLOOD! YOUR PRECIOUS BLOOD!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? LET ME... SEE.
COME, MY FRIEND, LET US CHAT FOR A WHILE. THE NIGHT IS YOUNG STILL, AND WE HAVE ALL THE DAY FOR SLEEPING.
THE COUNT CONTINUED TO DRONE ON, AND HUTTER FOUND HIMSELF ENTRANCED.
GHAH!
NO! NO... I'M FINE, REALLY. JUST A SCRATCH.
BONG BONG BONG
BONG BONG BONG
BONG BONGGGGG

WITH THE RISING SUN, JOHANN WOKE TO AN EMPTY ROOM AND A HEARTY BREAKFAST, WHICH HE ATE WITH GUSTO. THE ABSENCE OF HIS HOST SEEMED TO FREE HIM OF THE PREVIOUS NIGHT'S OPPRESSION.
EMBOLDENED BY HIS BREAKFAST AND THE PRESENCE OF THE SUN, THOUGH HE WAS LOATHE TO ADMIT IT - JOHANN WANDERED ABOUT THE CHATEAU AND ITS GROUNDS.
ALTHOUGH MANY OF THE DOORS WERE LOCKED - ODD FOR SO EMPTY A CASTLE - HE SOMEHOW FOUND PASSAGE TO A GAZEBO, PERFECT, HE THOUGHT, FOR WRITING HIS LETTER TO ELLEN.
Dearest Ellen,
My stay in this foreign land is a strange experience indeed. My host is an odd man who, I believe, lives alone in this mansion. His manners are bourgeoise and yet charmingly old-fashioned, his misshapen appearance and isolated locale is, I believe, the reason for his desire to move to a city. The villagers are quite superstitious and I think that they fear the Count. Perhaps by relocating, he may find more open-minded neighbors, more tolerant of his eccentric ways.
Lately I have suffered some frightening dreams. But, although they seem real, I know they are only

..dreams. I awoke this morning to discover two strange bites along my neck. Mosquitoes? Spiders? I do not know.
...and so I must take leave now dear heart. Do not despair, I shall soon be back in your arms.
All my love, Johann
SPYING A RIDER IN THE DISTANCE, JOHANN CALLED OUT TO HIM AND, AFTER MANY MINUTES OF COAXING, CONVINCED THE MAN TO POST THE LETTER TO ELLEN.
THE RIDER GALLOPED AWAY LIKE A MAN POSSESSED, BUT HIS DEPARTING WORDS RANG LOUDLY IN JOHANN'S EARS -- "MAY GOD HELP YOU, YOUNG MAN. MAY GOD HELP YOU."
...AS I SAID. I'M QUITE ACCUSTOMED TO SLEEPING DURING THE DAY. I TRUST YOU WERE ABLE TO AMUSE YOURSELF?
YES, OF COURSE. I WAS ABLE TO WRITE SOME LETTERS.

...OVER A HUNDRED YEARS?!
AHH, MY DARLING, WHAT A STRANGE NEIGHBOR WE ARE ACQUIRING!
" NOSFERATU DRINKS THE BLOOD OF THE YOUNG-- THE BLOOD SO NECESSARY TO HIS PECULIAR EXISTENCE." HAH! WHAT RUBB--
BONG!
BONG!
e Book
of
ampires


BONG!
BONG!
BONG!
BONGGG!
AAAAAAAGHH!
to be cont...

Nosferatu - who cannot die!
A million fancies strike you when you hear the name: Nosferatu!
N O S F E
R A T U
does not die!
Aren't you afraid? Men must die. But legend has it that a vampire, Nosferatu, "the undead," lives on men's blood! You want to see a symphony of horror? You may expect more. Be careful. Nosferatu is not just fun, not something to be taken lightly. Once more: beware.